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S ST 142 in physique to the Lo-los. They are very big men, much bigger than the average of any nation of Europe, with straight noses and reddish complexions. This is the prevailing type in the part of eastern Tibet in which we travelled, though mixed up with them, one also finds men, and especially women, of rounder and more Mongolian features. Also somewhat smaller and darker men are to be met with sometimes. The race, like nearly every other race, is doubtless a mixed one.

S ● 609 Descending 4000 feet from the monastery of San-ko-ya we found ourselves for the third time on the banks of the Ya-lung. The ferry-boat was on the other side of the river, and unfortunately the ferrymen also lived on the further bank. We began the usual shouting to attract their attention, and were met with an absolute refusal to bring the boat across.

"We don't know who you are. For all we know you may be coming to attack us, and at all events we cannot ferry you across without orders from the head-man," was the answer they shouted. Here then was our first experience of Tibetan ways. The size and strength of current of the river precluded all idea of swimming across to get the boat. In fact as long as they chose to stay on the other side, the game was clearly in their hands.

Finding argument and persuasion wasted on the ferrymen, my interpreter and I climbed 3,500 feet again to see the head-man who lived near the monastery. When we got there we found he was away, so we tried the lamas who had seemed fairly civil in the morning. They were at the moment engaged in their devotions which they performed to the accompaniment of loud bangings of drums and blowings of horns. Occasionally what appeared to be cakes of dough were brought out by attendants and put out of doors, probably as a work of merit, for the crows and other birds to eat.

S ST 788 609 S 609 In half an hour or so the ceremony was over, but our time had been wasted. The lamas said they had nothing to do with the affairs of the world and had no authority over the ferrymen. Doubtless if they had liked to send orders, they would have been obeyed at once, but seeing they did not intend to help us we descended again to

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the river bank, and resumed negotiations with the ferrymen. 609.

Huang-hsin-chai, my interpreter, had on more than one occasion proved himself useful in overcoming difficulties of this sort, and he was eventually so far successful that they agreed to let one or two of our Chinamen cross the next morning and argue the point with the chief on that bank of the river. Having settled this we loaded our baggage up again and went back, aided by the light of a full moon, to a place a mile or two off where there were a couple of houses from which we were able to buy corn for our mules.

The next morning my interpreter with one of our Chinamen went across taking my passport with him. It was an anxious time, as with the river in front of us and the ferry boat on the other side, we were so completely in their hands. I had, however, another plan in case the interpreter should fail. This was to go back some miles by the road we had come by, as if we intended to return, and then to turn off southwards by a road I had noted the day before to Wa-li ferry. Here I hoped we might have better luck, especially as it led to the territory of the Hsi-fan chief of Kua-pieh, who was not likely to be so suspicious of strangers as the Mi-li lama king.

From our camp I anxiously watched Huang go up the steep hillside on the other side of the river to the chief's house. By great luck there happened to be a Chinaman from Yen-yüan Hsien staying the night there, and he was able to read the passport to that very suspicious individual. It took an hour's conversation, chiefly threats, to bring him to understand the consequences that would ensue if he disregarded the Emperor's passport. At last he gave way. The boat came over, and we went across and camped at Pê-tiao outside the chief's house, disregarding his inhospitable remark, that there was a much better camping ground half a mile further on.

The people were very suspicious and watched our camp all night. What they thought we were going to do I don't know. Tibetans do not trust each other very far, and seldom let a stranger sleep in their houses, so it is certainly not surprising that such very curious-looking people as

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•609 myself and my Indian followers should be looked on as robbers, at all events till we had proved ourselves honest. However they sold us corn which was all I wanted.

The next morning our friend the Pê-tiao chief was very much on the alert. I saw him have a whispered conversation with our guide, evidently giving him some special orders. The result of the whispering was soon apparent. After going a short distance the guide tried to take us by a track that seemed to lead too far to the south. I sent Huang to a house close by and he found out from a little girl that our road led straight on westwards.

At this moment a lama who had been at Pê-tiao came up and began to protest vehemently that we were on the wrong road and that the guide was quite right. He was a stout middle-aged man and had evidently run up the hill after us, as his face was streaming with perspiration. One might have thought he was our best friend trying to save us from going wrong, but he overdid the part. It was impossible to believe in the sincerity of a man from a place where we had met with such a particularly cold reception.

After crossing a ridge we came to another place where two roads parted. Here our friend the lama again arrived on the scene and tried to persuade us to go to the right. A passing Chinaman put us right this time and in a few miles through fine forests we reached the monastery of Pa-êrh.

This was one of the most friendly monasteries I ever came across. The head lama came out and I made Huang read the passport to him. This seemed to impress him very much and he sold us as much corn as we wanted, and also made me a present of some flour, rice, and dried meat for which he would take no payment.

The fat lama again turned up at this moment shouting out at the top of his voice "You can't get any corn here. There's your road." However when he found we had already established friendly relations, he quite appreciated the joke and joined in the laughter at his own expense. So we parted the best of friends.

Crossing another ridge at 12,700 feet, we went down 1000 feet lower and found a nice sheltered place in the forest to camp in, with good grazing for the mules.

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Continuing our journey the next day, the 17th March, we passed through splendid forests along the course of a stream in which we found a party of Tibetans digging for gold. Leaving this valley we ascended another range, reaching the top at 14,500 feet. Lachman Jadu and I climbed up 500 feet higher and got a fine view of the surrounding country. In the distance to the north-west of us, two magnificent snow-covered peaks towered above the rest to a height that I should estimate as quite 20,000 feet.

From here we descended to K'u-lu[1], a village of perhaps 60 houses and some large monasteries, the biggest place we had seen for many days. The lamas had evidently got news of our coming, for we found a man waiting for us who showed us a house, and room to camp round it, a little outside the main village.

K'u-lu was the most thoroughly Tibetan place we had yet come across, and it was here that I saw yaks for the first time. There was one tied up just outside our camp, which presented a curious appearance in the morning, covered with icicles hanging to its hair all over. So far I had been agreeably surprised with the warm temperature, for even at night there had only been a few degrees of frost, but here at K'u-lu at 12,500 feet it was decidedly colder, and the thermometer fell to 17°.

The people here are thoroughly Tibetan in manners and customs, and very few of them understand any Chinese. They live in large well-built stone houses, calculated no doubt to keep out the cold which is probably often more severe than we found it in March.

The lamas of K'u-lu were very suspicious. They asked me to halt a day so that we might talk things over and arrange for the continuance of my journey. I did not see what in the world we had to talk about and would not agree to this.

The next morning my interpreter went to the village to see about a guide, and was asked into the monastery by the head lama. He found that dignitary having an early break-

[1] Mr Amundsen marks a place called Kang-u about where K'u-lu is. Probably Kang-u is the Tibetan and K'u-lu the Chinese name. See *Geographical Journal* for June 1900.

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•609 fast and using a *gold plate* to eat off. Here was then the reason for the suspiciousness with which strangers are looked on in Mi-li. The country is probably rich in this metal, and the Mi-li lamas are determined to keep it for themselves.

"What have you really come for? Have you not come to dig for gold?" was the first question the lama put. Huang was able with perfect truth to assert that we did not know till the day before that there was any gold in Mi-li, and that we were merely passing through the country on our way to A-tun-tzŭ. With ready Chinese fluency he added that the English and Chinese nations were like brothers, that I was a very high official, and that if I was hindered in any way, they would get into very serious trouble with the authorities at Peking.

Whether they believed him or not they gave me a guide, and we were able to start, though as will subsequently appear the guide did not turn out a complete success.

It is interesting to note that though K'u-lu is such an insignificant place, the head lama has the rank of a *chih-t'ing*. The Chinese Government seem occasionally to confer these dignities on chiefs of non-Chinese tribes. This probably accounts for the appearance on many maps of Yung-ning, a small Mo-so town in north-western Yün-nan, as Yung-ning Fu. There is certainly no Chinese mandarin of *fu* rank there, and Chinese official language would describe the town as a *t'u-fu* or *aboriginal fu*, a place very inferior in importance to a regularly constituted *fu* district.

Leaving K'u-lu we crossed a pleasantly wooded spur and arrived in the afternoon at A-pê-ti, a village of a few scattered houses. In one of these we were most hospitably received by an elderly lady with a large family of sons and daughters, who helped to unload our mules and did everything they could for us.

Though the traveller in Tibet finds the inhabitants as a rule inhospitable if not actually hostile, I do not think that this is due so much to any real unfriendliness to strangers as to the suspicious attitude which the nature of the country naturally engenders. I believe the Tibetans to be

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on the whole a kindly and goodnatured race. But law and order are by no means firmly established in their country, and it is no more than a necessary precaution that they should wish to know something about a stranger before they become too friendly or take him in as a guest. This is their feeling even towards travellers of their own race, and it was only natural that they should be still more suspicious of a party composed of Englishmen, natives of India, and Chinese, who might for all they knew have been brigands, and who at all events could give no reason for their journey which would appear satisfactory to Tibetan understandings. 609.

However natural this attitude of suspicion may be, it gives a lot of trouble to the traveller, and we were to have some experience of this on the following day. After we had gone a short distance on our way to Mi-li the guide sent with us from K'u-lu, who had I thought gone back the day before, overtook us again. It struck me at once that he must have come on to hinder us, and it soon turned out that I was right. At the first village we reached, about three miles from our starting point, he proposed that we should halt for the night. When I indignantly refused, he began to argue, and said that the road to Mi-li went round to the north. This I knew was a lie. He then asked in an impertinent manner what my business was in Mi-li, and why I wanted to go there. As he was merely a guide with no authority to ask questions at all, I saw the time for action had arrived and gave him a whack or two over the back with my stick. My example was followed with what I thought almost unnecessary violence by Huang, my interpreter, and the Tibetan was very soon reduced to tears and groans. It appears that he had turned up at our camp of the previous night and tried to persuade the people not to sell us corn. Huang had heard of this. Hence his vigour in paying off old scores.

On the first sign of a fray, all the villagers had run away inside their houses and locked the doors, so we were left entirely alone with the completely humbled guide, who now walked meekly along with us on the direct road to Mi-li.

We had not gone very far when we found a lama with

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• 609 several followers sitting on the ground a little way off the road. He beckoned to me to come to him. I told him he could come to me if he had anything to say, and he accordingly did so.

"Where are you going and what have you come for?" was his first rather natural question. I told him I was passing through Mi-li on my way to A-tun-tzŭ. He began to demur to my going on to Mi-li, said the king was away at another monastery, and enquired what presents I had for his majesty. I said I had no particular business with the king to induce me to go out of my way to visit him, and that I had no presents for him. I then had my passport read to the lama. He understood Chinese well enough to realise that this document could not be disregarded, and had nothing more to say, so we went on.

[631] This part of the country is entirely under the influence of the Tibetan lamas, and no Chinese official ever comes near it, but still it is nominally part of the province of Ssŭ-ch'uan, so that a passport meets here with a respect that would not be shown it in the part of Tibet beyond the Chinese frontier.

000 A very long bit of downhill brought us to the Mi-li River[1] which we crossed by an excellent wooden bridge which had only just been finished, the old bridge having been swept away by a flood. The river is here at an elevation of 7,500 feet. Its general width is some 60 yards; it has a strong current and is too deep to be fordable.

It was now getting dark and I wanted to halt for the night at some houses near the bridge; but I found we could get no fodder for our mules here, so we had to climb 2000 feet of very steep hill to Mi-li which we did not reach till eight in the evening. The guide, who had been most willing and useful since his thrashing, was sent on ahead, and found us a house to put up in with room for the mules underneath, so we got settled down pretty comfortably at last. It was a hard march of over twenty miles, and the

[1] Mr Amundsen gives Gya-yul Ch'u, "the river of China," as the Tibetan name of this stream. It seems probable that this is the same river that flows past Li-t'ang.

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of his coming to reach the Mi-li officials. The consequence was that he met with no obstruction, and was on the whole treated with courtesy and helped on his journey[1]. I must also say in justice to the Mi-li officials that after I had arrived at the capital and satisfied them that I was neither a robber nor a gold-seeker, I had no further trouble of any sort. It was doubtless my sudden and unannounced appearance on their eastern frontier which caused me to be viewed with suspicion at first.

On the morning after our arrival, a crowd of people from the town turned up to have a look at the strangers and their property. A Tibetan crowd does not annoy one like a Chinese crowd. They are a better-mannered people than the Chinese and are satisfied with a look, without wanting to stand staring for hours.

Among the visitors was our lama friend of the day before. It appears he is a very big man in Mi-li, a sort of prime minister. He was fairly civil and gave me some tea and dried meat. I returned the compliment by presenting him with a bottle of salad oil. Directly he saw me coming towards him, he retired hastily out of sight into the stable, and when I followed him and gave him the bottle, he immediately hid it under his robe. He probably thought it was liquor, and was doubtless wofully disappointed when he opened it.

There are three or four Chinese traders living in Mi-li who say they came originally from the province of Shen-hsi. But they have become very much Tibetanised, and even speak Chinese with a Tibetan accent.

Chinamen are certainly not encouraged to settle in Mi-li. Mr Amundsen relates that a few years ago some Chinese came to wash for gold in Mi-li territory, but the Tibetan inhabitants in their zeal for the preservation of native industries, took the extreme protectionist measure of killing the intruders by rolling stones down the hillside on them. "Now," Mr Amundsen remarks, "none but Milians wash for gold!"

[1] Mr Amundsen gives an account of his journey in the *Geographical Journals* for June 1900 and November 1900.

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000 enough of it, and did a bolt in the night. Luckily in this country there are not many roads to choose from, and we followed the only one there was. After we had gone a mile, the snow became so deep that all traces of the path disappeared. However, as the country was open grass we were able to strike straight across in what seemed the right direction, passing a large collection of wooden huts and cattle pens, now entirely deserted and probably only used in the summer.

Soon afterwards I spotted on top of the ridge one of the small stone pagodas, such as are often built by the road side in this country. This turned out to be the case here, and we soon found ourselves on the right track again. The top of the range was reached at 14,900 feet, and descending through thick woods we gradually got out of the snow, and reached the village of Ming-yu-ho where we were able to enjoy the real pleasure of being warm once more.

•609 Here we met with the usual Tibetan reception. All the inhabitants locked their doors, and looking out at us from top-storey windows, shouted that we should find an excellent camping-ground two miles further on. However finding one or two men who knew some Chinese, we got on speaking terms with them, and pitched our tents in the village.

000 From Ming-yu-ho a road goes off northward which, they say, leads to Li-t'ang. I should much have liked to have followed it for a little distance, and then to have turned off westward straight for A-tun-tzŭ, but the necessity for my being up to time in meeting Ryder and Manifold prevented me from trying any experiments of this sort. Moreover my men were getting shoeless and my mules beginning to knock up, and I could not risk the not improbable contingency of being brought up by uninhabited snowy mountains.

Taking the road to Chung-tien, therefore, we crossed a high range and descended to Ta-lung, a yak-grazing village, with a hundred or more of these animals. There was a good deal of snow on the ground where we crossed the range and very little more would have made it impassable. As it was, we had to unload our mules in one place, and carry the baggage for a short distance.

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At Ta-lung they are evidently unaccustomed to strangers, and they apparently took us for thieves. The good man of the house stood at his door shouting out, over and over again, "I've got nothing here, I've got nothing here." He was ably seconded by his wife, who yelled out what I suppose was abuse with violent gesticulations. It was too cold to stand upon ceremony, so I walked into the house, trusting to things calming down when our involuntary host could be made to understand that we had not come to rob him.

The man contented himself with feeble protests, but the lady was in a most pugnacious mood and attacked one of my Chinese coolies with a broom. I had some difficulty in preventing him from retaliating with the legs of the plane-table—a very formidable weapon. At this moment another man turned up who proved more sensible and understood a little Chinese. Friendly relations were soon established, and while most of my followers settled down in the house we had forcibly occupied, I was shown another, quite new and unoccupied, where I was very comfortable. The thermometer fell to 17° at night and there was a bitter wind blowing. It would have been unpleasantly cold in tents.

I have several times found it necessary to force my way into Tibetan houses, and occasionally even to push the owner somewhat violently on one side. A quite indefensible proceeding no doubt, but circumstances alter cases, and I have always found it justified by complete success. After getting inside my followers and myself proceed to make ourselves at home and adopt an attitude of passive resistance to any suggestions that we are unwelcome guests. When our host realises that we do no harm and produce money to pay for anything he can sell us, he becomes gradually less and less sulky, and by the evening we are on the best of terms.

I have once or twice come back a second time to a house which we have entered in this high-handed fashion, and have been received in the most friendly way. In countries where might is right, it is a necessity to assert oneself sometimes. The alternative would be sleeping out in the cold and getting no supplies.